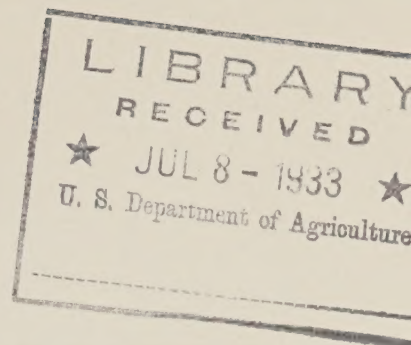


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UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE
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SQUASH BUG

One of the most common and most troublesome pests of pumpkins, squashes, cucumbers and similar vine crops is the squash bug (Anasa tristis). It is distributed throughout the whole United States and is a difficult pest to control.

The adults are brownish-black bugs about $2/3$ inches long. The young or nymphs resemble the adults in general shape, are grayish-white with black legs and vary in size from $3/16$ to $1/2$ inch. Both adults and nymphs are characterized by a disagreeable odor. The nymphs may be found hidden about the base of the plant under dead leaves or clods, or on the underside of the leaves. They rapidly seek cover when disturbed.

Leaves of the plant rapidly wilt when attacked by this pest and soon become blackened and dead. Young plants are frequently entirely killed. Large plants may have entire branches killed, in addition to numerous leaves.

The adults pass the winter under dead vines, leaves, clods, or almost any covering offering shelter. They become active in the spring and lay their dark brown oval eggs in groups on the under side of the leaves in the angle formed by the veins. The nymphs hatch in ten to fourteen days and soon begin feeding on the young plants. The young bugs become adults in from 45 to 60 days, most of the old adults having died before this time.

No entirely satisfactory method of control for this pest has been developed. It is resistant to treatments with contact poisons such as nicotine sulfate soap solution or pyrethrum extracts, especially in the more mature stages. The very young bugs can be reduced in numbers if careful treatments are made with these poisons. It is necessary, in order to obtain the desired results, to apply the remedy directly to the insect's body. This is rather difficult because the young and newly-hatched nymphs feed, for the most part, on the undersides of the leaves

particularly on the lower leaves of the plant. The use of an angle nozzle on the sprayer will be of aid in reaching the undersides of the leaves.

Damage by this pest can be prevented to a large extent by clean up measures after harvest as the adults hibernate in debris about the fields. All crop remnants should be cleaned up after harvest and destroyed by burning. Kerosene can be used to facilitate the destruction of this material. Many of the immature forms will be prevented from reaching maturity by plowing under the vines after harvest. This is one of the most important control measures, as a neglected pumpkin or squash field will serve as a source of food for this insect, especially during the latter part of the season, and will result in many more adult bugs entering hibernation.

Hedge rows or ditch banks adjacent to the field should be carefully cleaned during the dormant season. This will destroy many of the overwintering adults and reduce the numbers on plantings the following year.

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